

**NOAA Science Council  
Research and Development Enterprise Committee  
Terms of Reference**

**Purpose and Scope**

Within the scope of responsibilities of the NOAA Science Council (NSC), the Research and Development Enterprise Committee (RDEC) provides advice to the NSC to continuously strengthen NOAA's Research and Development (R&D) Enterprise (per NAO 216-115B, Research and Development in NOAA, including NAO Procedural Handbook and Appendices). RDEC focus areas include (but are not limited to) policy, planning, monitoring, evaluating, and reporting on NOAA's R&D Enterprise.

RDEC implements the direction provided by, and with the authority of the NSC.

**Committee Structure**

Membership

The RDEC membership is representative of NOAA's organizational structure (primarily Line Offices (LOs)) so that advice and responses to NSC direction consider the mechanisms by which NOAA implements its responsibilities.

Chair

The Chair will lead the Committee, conduct meetings, guide tasks, and oversee progress. The Chair will be appointed and approved by the NSC for a two-year term. The Chair will not serve as their LO representative to the Committee.

Vice Chair

The Vice Chair will fulfill the Chair's responsibilities when the Chair is unavailable. The Vice Chair will be selected from among the RDEC membership by the RDEC for a two year rotation, and must represent a different LO from the Chair.

Executive Secretary

The Executive Secretary will support the Chair and Vice Chair, coordinate the Committee, manage meetings, and facilitate tasks. The Executive Secretary will be appointed by the Chair in consultation with RDEC membership.

Members

The Committee members must be federal employees knowledgeable in the areas of science policy and the planning, monitoring, evaluation, and reporting of the R&D activities conducted in the interest of the LO they represent. The Committee may call upon the other NOAA Science Council committees and subject matter experts as needed to inform planning and other activities. The members will be approved by their LO Representative on the NSC and consist of:

- Representative of the National Environmental Satellite, Data, and Information Service

- Representative of the National Marine Fisheries Service
- Representative of the National Ocean Service
- Representative of the National Weather Service
- Representative of the NOAA Chief Financial Officer
- Representative of the Office of Marine and Aviation Operations
- Representative of the Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research

*Ex-officio* members

- Representative from the NOAA Social Science Committee
- Representative from the Office of the NOAA Chief Scientist
- Representative from the NOAA Office of Communications
- Scientific Integrity Officer
- Representative of the NOAA Data Governance Committee

Members will serve terms of up to three years and not be appointed to consecutive terms.

Line offices are encouraged to appoint alternate members in the event the member is unable to attend. Tenure as an alternate member will not count against RDEC term limits.

**Duties and Time Commitment**

Members should anticipate contributing up to 10-15% of their time throughout the year. Members are encouraged to work with their supervisors to have the RDEC responsibilities in their performance plans. The RDEC Chair, or his/her designees, is responsible for reporting to the NSC.

Specific duties for the Committee members include, but are not limited to:

- Attending regular Committee meetings;
- Managing Committee data calls within their associated Line Office;
- Providing knowledgeable input to the Committee to inform strategic planning, associated analyses, and implementation of NOAA's corporate R&D activities;
- Providing informed analysis of NOAA R&D performance data to determine NOAA's effectiveness in reaching stated milestones and objectives;
- Compiling and contributing summaries of accomplishments, data, and recommendations for the annual science accomplishments report
- Ensuring ongoing communication of R&D priorities across Line Offices, as well as within the Committee itself;
- Providing data and informed analysis through various evaluation mechanisms to improve the processes and outcomes of NOAA's R&D activities.
- Providing oversight for the reporting of R&D projects in a NOAA R&D database

Line Offices are expected to provide the necessary staff support for their RDEC members to accomplish their duties.

**Committee Roles and Responsibilities**

- Provides advice at the request of the NSC on policies that affect NOAA's R&D Enterprise, including but not limited to, the development, review, or modification of policies;
- Coordinates the implementation of policy on NOAA's R&D enterprise as directed by the NSC (e.g. NAO 216-115B and NAO 216-105B, Policy on Research and Development Transitions), coordinating with other cross-LO committees as needed;
- Coordinates and develops reports and other materials (as directed by NSC) for review and approval by the NSC;
- Identifies and recommends to the NSC critical R&D foci to shape and optimize NOAA's future R&D enterprise (e.g., near-term/far-term, high-risk/low-risk balance);
- Informs NOAA's Strategic Research Guidance Memorandum by recommending to the NSC any R&D Enterprise portfolio changes to ensure progress to plan relative to NOAA strategy and R&D Priorities;
- Evaluate the consistency, quality, reporting of reviews of the scientific enterprise, and the value derived from them;
- May also conduct other tasks as assigned by the NSC; and
- Is encouraged to interact and coordinate its activities with other NSC Committees, as appropriate.

### **Meetings and Coordination**

The RDEC meets up to twice per month, with any additional meetings at the direction of the Committee Chair. Members or their designated representatives are expected to participate and make every reasonable effort to attend scheduled meetings. Committee meetings are open to NOAA employees and contractors. The RDEC may hold closed executive working sessions as needed; however, all decisions will be made during open meetings.

### **Decision Making Process**

The RDEC is an advisory body and will make decisions through informed consensus. When the Committee presents decisional items to the NSC for approval, it will provide either a consensus recommendation, with adequate information about the basis for reaching its consensus, or, when there is not a consensus within the Committee, a set of options with pros and cons. The NSC is the final decision-making body for all Committee activities.

### **Terms of Reference Approval and Revision Process**

RDEC will review and revise as necessary this document every two years, or at the request of the NSC, to ensure continued accuracy and utility. Final approval of the Terms of Reference rests with the NSC.

### **References**

[NAO 216-105B: Policy on Research and Development Transitions.](#)

[NAO 216-115B: Research and Development in NOAA. NAO Procedural Handbook and Appendices](#)